

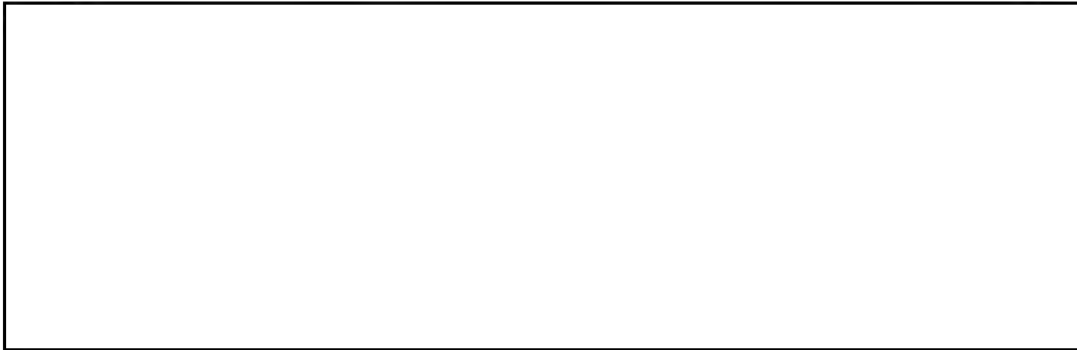
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25X1

*C O N T E N T S*



25X1

Dutch to Keep NATO Air Wing . . . . .	3
West Germans Concerned About New Soviet-East German Treaty . . . . .	4
West Germans Willing to Accept Vietnamese and Cambodian Refugees . . . . .	5
Local Elections in Luxembourg . . . . .	6

October 10, 1975

SECRET

25X1

Approved For Release 2004/09/03 : CIA-RDP79T00865A001900270001-3

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Approved For Release 2004/09/03 : CIA-RDP79T00865A001900270001-3

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Dutch to Keep NATO Air Wing

The Dutch will keep at least some of the 15 Neptune naval reconnaissance planes--which are committed to NATO anti-submarine surveillance--in operation until they are replaced.

According to a Dutch defense ministry spokesman, second-hand, and thus cheaper, planes are being sought from European countries as replacements. Original plans to purchase new US-made Orion aircraft apparently have been scrapped.

The government had proposed a number of defense budget cuts that included retiring the Neptunes without replacement. The proposal ran into strong opposition from NATO as well as from members of parliament and the military. This apparently prompted Defense Minister Vredeling to withdraw his proposal to ground the Neptunes at the end of this year.

The Dutch reportedly are considering buying used French-built Atlantiques from Germany and France. The Atlantique was designed to replace the Neptune in the NATO arsenal, but it has been in service since 1961 and is not nearly as sophisticated as the Orion.



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October 10, 1975

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West Germans Concerned About New Soviet-East  
German Treaty

West German officials are apprehensive that the Soviet-East German treaty signed this week has ominous implications for West Berlin.

Their major concern is with article seven of the treaty. This distorts the language of the Quadripartite Agreement of 1971 to give the impression that East German and Soviet relations with West Berlin are on the same footing as those between West Germany and that city.

There are no indications that the treaty presages a new Soviet-East German pressure campaign against West Berlin. Bonn, however, believes that Pankow and Moscow will increasingly try to by-pass the Federal Republic and deal directly with the West Berlin authorities. Both have long attempted to reduce Bonn's influence in West Berlin, while enlarging their role in order to increase the city's dependence on them.

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The allied ambassadors in Bonn, in response to a West German request, have agreed ad referendum to issue a brief statement that the treaty does not affect Quadripartite rights and responsibilities for either Berlin or Germany.

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October 10, 1975

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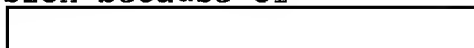
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West Germans Willing to Accept Vietnamese and  
Cambodian Refugees

The Minister President of Baden-Wuerttemberg, Hans Filbinger, stated on October 8 that the West German government has decided to accept 3,000 Vietnamese and Cambodian refugees who are now in reception camps in the US and Guam. The West Germans, heretofore, have accepted only a handful of refugees. Filbinger implied that the government has made the decision because of urgent requests from the US.



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October 10, 1975

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Local Elections in Luxembourg

The coalition of Socialists and Democrats, that won the national election in 1974, faces its first popularity test in local elections on October 12. It is likely that the two parties will again take votes from the old-guard opposition Christian Socialists. The other two small opposition parties, a splinter socialist group and the Communists, are not expected to increase their miniscule representation in local assemblies.

The Democratic Party of Prime Minister Thorn--the junior partner in the governing coalition--hopes the election will reflect grass roots approval of their leader's performance on an international stage. Thorn, currently the UN general assembly president, commuted to Luxembourg from New York to campaign for local party candidates.

Traditional voting patterns showed signs of breaking down in the last national contest, and party loyalties are still in a state of flux. The trend has been away from the conservative Christian Socialists--still Luxembourg's largest party--and toward the center, as represented by the two-party coalition. In the last local elections in 1969, the Christian Socialists won 37 percent of the vote in the 15 largest communes, but slipped to about 28 percent in the 1974 national contest.

Political preferences, as a result of changes in life style and the rural-urban population shift, are being dictated less by tradition and more by new socio-economic pressures. As a result, the voters

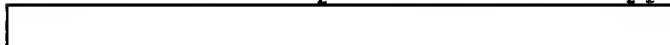
October 10, 1975

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for the first time are puzzling over rival party promises and programs.

The government's skillful handling of unemployment in recent months should translate into votes for the local candidates of the coalition parties, despite the parochialism and personal favoritism that usually flavors local races. The government arranged with the unions to permit "surplus" workers in the depressed steel industry to be shunted temporarily into specially created public works jobs at a ten percent reduction in their regular salaries. Most Luxembourgers realize that their financial well-being is dependent on the economies of their neighbors--particularly West Germany and Belgium--and the government's effort to take up the slack is appreciated.



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October 10, 1975

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